

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

1. (Currently amended) A water absorbent comprising
  - (a) particles of a water absorbent polymer, and
  - (b) a nitrogenous polymer ~~containing~~ having a weight average molecule weight in the range from 100,000 to 500,000 daltons and from 5 to 17 7.5 to 15 mol/kg, based on the total weight of the nitrogenous polymer, of protonatable nitrogen atoms.
2. (Previously presented) The water absorbent of claim 1 wherein the nitrogenous polymer is a hydrolysis product of a homo- or copolymer of an N-vinylcarboxamide, N-vinylcarboximide, or a mixture thereof.
3. (Previously presented) The water absorbent of claim 1 having
  - a particle size distribution wherein more than 98% by weight of the particles are from 100 to 850  $\mu\text{m}$  in size,
  - a Saline Flow Conductivity of at least  $30 \times 10^{-7} \text{ cm}^3\text{s/g}$ ,
  - a Ball Burst Strength (30 min) of at least 50 gf,
  - a Ball Burst Strength (16 h) of at least 50 gf, and
  - a quotient [BBS (30 min) - BBS (16 h)]/BBS (30 min) of less than 0.8.
4. (Currently amended) The water absorbent of claim 2 wherein the nitrogenous polymer is a hydrolysis product of a homopolymer of N-vinylformamide having a degree of hydrolysis in the range from ~~30~~ 44 to ~~80~~ 75 mol%.
5. (Cancelled)
6. (Previously presented) The water absorbent of claim 1 comprising from 0.001% to 5% by weight of the nitrogenous polymer, based on the weight of the water absorbent polymer.
7. (Previously presented) The water absorbent of claim 1 further comprising a finely divided water-insoluble salt.
8. (Previously presented) The water absorbent of claim 1 wherein the water absorbent polymer is polymerized from

- from 49.9% to 99.9% by weight of at least one monomer A selected from the group consisting of monoethylenically unsaturated acids and salts thereof,
- from 0% to 50% by weight of at least one monoethylenically unsaturated monomer B other than said monomer A, and
- from 0.001% to 20% by weight of at least one crosslinking monomer C.

9. (Previously presented) The water absorbent of claim 1 wherein the particles of the water absorbent polymer are surface postcrosslinked.

10. (Previously presented) The water absorbent of claim 1 further comprising a carrier selected from the group consisting of cellulose, modified cellulose, rayon, polypropylene, polyester, hydrophilicized nylon, polyethylene, polycrylic, polyamide, polystyrene, polyurethane, and polyacrylonitrile.

11. (Previously presented) The water absorbent as claimed in claim 10 wherein the nitrogenous polymer is applied onto the carrier.

12. (Previously presented) A process for producing a water absorbent of claim 1 comprising applying the nitrogenous polymer or a solution thereof onto the particles of the water absorbent polymer and, if necessary, drying the water absorbent.